

## CHAPTER

## 8

## SECTION 3

## Section Summary

## REVOLTS IN LATIN AMERICA

By the late 1700s, revolutionary fever had spread to Latin America, where the social system had led to discontent. Spanish-born *peninsulares*, the highest social class, dominated the government and the Church. Many **creoles**—Latin Americans of European descent who owned the haciendas, ranches, and mines—resented their second-class status. **Mestizos**, people of Native American and European descent, and **mulattoes**, people of African and European descent, were angry at being denied the status, wealth, and power that the other groups enjoyed. The Enlightenment and the French and American revolutions inspired creoles, but they were reluctant to act. However, when Napoleon invaded Spain in 1808, Latin American leaders decided to demand independence from Spain.

Revolution had already erupted in Hispaniola in 1791 when **Toussaint L'Ouverture** led a slave rebellion there. The fighting cost many lives, but the rebels achieved their goal of abolishing slavery and taking control of the island. Napoleon's army tried to reconquer the island but failed. In 1804, the island declared itself independent under the name Haiti.

In 1810, a creole priest, **Father Miguel Hidalgo**, called Mexicans to fight for independence. After some successes, he was captured and executed. **Father José Morelos** tried to carry the revolution forward, but he too was captured and killed. Success finally came in 1821 when revolutionaries led by Agustín de Iturbide overthrew the Spanish viceroy and declared independence. Central American colonies soon declared independence, too.

In the early 1800s, discontent spread across South America. **Simón Bolívar** led an uprising in Venezuela. Conservative forces toppled his new republic, but Bolívar did not give up. In a grueling campaign, he marched his army across the Andes, swooping down into Bogotá and taking the city from the surprised Spanish. Then he moved south to free Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia. There, he joined forces with another great leader, **José de San Martín**. San Martín helped Argentina and Chile win freedom from Spain. The wars of independence ended in 1824, but power struggles among South American leaders led to destructive civil wars. In Brazil, Dom Pedro, the son of the Portuguese king, became emperor and proclaimed independence for Brazil in 1822.

## Review Questions

1. Why were creoles ready to revolt by 1808?

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2. How did Brazil gain its independence?

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### READING CHECK

What two leaders helped free much of South America?

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### VOCABULARY STRATEGY

What does the word *proclaimed* mean in the underlined sentence? *Proclaim* comes from the Latin word *proclamare*. The prefix *pro-* means "before," and *clamare* means "to cry out" or "shout." Use these word-origin clues to help you to figure out the meaning of *proclaimed*.

### READING SKILL

**Identify Main Ideas** In the first paragraph of the Summary, most of the sentences are supporting details. Which sentence states the main idea of that paragraph?

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